

Department of Labor Submissions for
President's Interagency Council on Women's
America's Commitment 2000

[These submissions are organized according to the Platform for Action strategic objectives.]

A. Women and Poverty

A.1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.

ENFORCING LABOR STANDARDS

Increasing the Minimum Wage.

About 57 percent of minimum wage workers in the U.S. are adult women, many of whom are employed in low-wage service or retail industries (e.g., domestic or food service, health care, janitorial services). Large numbers of women are also employed in the nation's garment industry, both in factories and at home.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) offers minimum wage and overtime pay protection to more than half the U.S. workforce. Pursuant to the Small Business Jobs Protection Act of 1996 (amending the FLSA Act), the federal minimum wage was increased from \$4.25 to \$4.75 an hour in 1996 and to \$5.15 an hour in 1997 -- a total increase of 90 cents per hour benefitting nearly 5.7 million women.

After the law's enactment, the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, which enforces and administers U.S. labor standards including the FLSA, embarked on an educational outreach effort to ensure that businesses understood their changing obligations and employees their new rights. The agency used press releases, DOL's Internet home page, and direct mailings to newsletters, interested organizations, and advocacy groups to pass on newly-developed compliance documents and other minimum wage materials.

Industry-Specific Initiatives to Enforce Labor Standards.

Wage and Hour focuses on increasing compliance with labor standards (minimum wage, overtime pay, child labor requirements, etc.) in targeted low-wage industries. These include (1) the garment industry; (2) agriculture; and (3) health care; and other industries such as restaurants, janitorial services, temporary help, and hotels/motels. In Fiscal Year 1998, Wage and Hour recovered more than \$29.7 million for 72,000 workers in the targeted low-wage industries.

(1) The Garment Industry "No Sweat" Campaign.

Garment workers, who are mostly women, are frequently among the most exploited and vulnerable workers in the United States. They are often immigrant and non-English speaking. They are often paid significantly less than the minimum wage and may work long hours for no overtime pay. They may be working at an age younger than the law allows. Their working environment can be quite unsafe, including locked exits, electrical hazards, and unsanitary conditions.

In 1995, the Department of Labor launched its “No Sweat” campaign to increase compliance with labor standards in this industry. The campaign’s accomplishments have included:

- More than 100 manufacturing firms have signed Wage and Hour's Compliance Monitoring Agreement.
- Minimum wage and overtime violations have been reduced.
- \$17.7 million has been recovered for 54,056 workers.
- Several compliance monitoring workshops for the industry have been conducted, and worker forums have been sponsored in the major garment centers to educate workers about their rights.
- Religious groups, universities and socially responsible businesses have publicly announced support for the "No Sweat" strategy, and are educating the public on compliance and raising awareness.

The “No Sweat” campaign’s success has resulted from a multi-pronged strategy of broadening enforcement, stepping up education and outreach to all players in the industry; seeking and maintaining partnerships; and finding innovative techniques to recognize those in the industry who are working to improve compliance.

Among the campaign’s activities in fulfillment of this strategy have been the following:

- Targeting enforcement sweeps in major garment centers; notifying manufacturers of "hot goods" produced by their contractors; and, when hot goods can be traced, contacting retailers who are selling these goods. [The "hot goods" provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) generally make it illegal to ship goods in interstate commerce which were made in violation of the minimum wage or overtime requirements of the FLSA or produced in an establishment where child labor violations occurred in the last 30 days.]
- Developing contractor cases for civil and criminal prosecution; including referrals to the joint Department of Labor/Department of Justice Worker Exploitation Task Force. [See section D.1 for a description of this Task Force].
- Conducting worker forums with community organizations, unions, and worker advocacy groups to teach workers about their rights and encourage them to come forward with complaints; and reaching out to schools and community organizations that conduct "English as a Second Language" courses to help make workers aware of their rights and the value of compliance to

their financial well-being.

- Hosting meetings with all stakeholders in the industry to report on compliance in the industry and seek input for strategies to improve compliance.
- Working with the Fair Labor Association (FLA). This organization was chartered in 1998 by the Apparel Industry Partnership, its predecessor. In 1997, the Apparel Industry Partnership, composed of leaders from the footwear and apparel industry, labor, non-governmental organizations, and consumer groups, announced the creation of a “Workplace Code of Conduct” setting forth standards defining decent and humane working conditions in the United States and abroad. The FLA is overseeing the monitoring and evaluation of participating companies’ compliance with the Workplace Code of Conduct. Its Monitoring Principles govern internal (factory-based) and independent external monitoring of companies seeking FLA certification.
- Working with universities, colleges, and licensing companies to encourage them to take steps to ensure that licensed apparel is made in accordance with labor standards in the U.S. and abroad.

(2) Agriculture.

Adopting the successful strategy used in the "No Sweat" campaign, in FY 1998 Wage and Hour began placing legal and moral responsibility for the substandard conditions created by farm labor contractors on those who hire them and benefit from their services: growers and processors. Among the innovative tools used in this effort has been the vigorous application of the "joint employment" standard under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA) and the FLSA, and the use of the "hot goods" provisions of the FLSA. Wage and Hour has been developing "Partnerships in Compliance" in the "salad bowl" commodities (lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions and garlic) and conducting targeted enforcement in the cucumber, onions and lettuce commodities to develop baselines of compliance.

Wage and Hour has also been conducting the Fair Harvest/Safe Harvest educational and outreach campaign designed to inform farmworkers and their families about their workplace rights and the dangers to children in the agricultural workplace. The campaign includes a wallet card containing labor rights information, a children's booklet illustrating hazards in the agricultural workplace, a poster highlighting these issues, and a toll free telephone number farmworkers can call for additional information.

(3) Health Care Industry.

Building on the results of its FY 1997 and FY 1998 compliance surveys aimed at low-wage sectors in

the long-term care industry, in FY 1999 Wage and Hour began carrying out aggressive education/outreach activities and locally targeted initiatives in the nursing home and residential care sectors of the industry.

[For more information on enforcement of labor standards, see Wage and Hour's home page at http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/public/whd_org.htm.]

Enforcement in The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is a self-governing Commonwealth of the United States located in the western Pacific Ocean. Virtually the entire private workforce in the CNMI consists of foreign temporary workers -- primarily in the garment, tourist, and construction industries -- who often live in near-peonage conditions. A large majority of these workers are women. Because only the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act apply to employees in the CNMI, they are paid significantly less than the mainland minimum wage, yet the goods they produce can be imported into the United States with "Made in the U.S.A." labels. In addition, U.S. immigration laws do not apply to the CNMI.

Beginning in FY 1995, the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour office, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and Solicitor's Office have received substantial funding from the Department of the Interior to support enhanced enforcement in the CNMI. This funding is part of the Federal-CNMI Initiative on Labor, Immigration and Law Enforcement, established at the direction of Congress and beginning in FY 1995. DOL's Solicitor's Office has pursued allegations of abusive working conditions in the CNMI and filed lawsuits against a number of employers alleged to have underpaid their workers or maintained unsafe or unhealthy workplaces.

[For more information, see the Department of Labor's home page at <http://www.dol.gov>, and the Department of the Interior's "Federal-CNMI Initiative on Labor, Immigration & Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands at <http://www.doi.gov/oia/cnmi/98nmi.html>.]

WELFARE REFORM

The passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 significantly reformed the nation's welfare laws. A new system of block grants to the States for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) was created. Moving people from welfare to work is now one of the primary goals of federal welfare policy.

Welfare-to-Work Grants.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 authorized the Department of Labor to provide Welfare-to-Work Grants to States and local communities to create additional job opportunities for the hardest-to-employ recipients of TANF. The authorized amount for the grants totaled \$3 billion; \$1.5 billion to be awarded

in each of Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999. Two kinds of grants were to be awarded: (1) formula grants to states, and 2) competitive grants to local communities. A small amount of the total was set aside for special purposes, including one percent for Indian tribes and \$100 million for performance bonuses for successful states. The grants are administered by DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

Formula Grants to States: All 50 States, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam were eligible to apply for grants. Forty eight grants totaling approximately \$1.1 billion were awarded for FY 1998, and 45 grants totaling \$1.0 billion for FY 1999. States receiving grants are required to pass 85 percent of the money to local Private Industry Councils (sometimes known as workforce development boards), which oversee and guide job training programs in geographical jurisdictions called service delivery areas. States are allowed to retain 15 percent of the money for welfare-to-work projects of their choice. They must match one dollar of non-federal funding for every two dollars of federal funding provided.

Competitive Grants to Local Communities: These grants were to be awarded directly to local governments, Private Industry Councils, and other entities (such as community development corporations, community action agencies, and community-based organizations) which applied directly in conjunction with a Private Industry Council or local government. Round 1 grant awards were announced in May 1998; approximately \$200 million was awarded to 51 grantees. Round 2 awards, totaling \$273 million to 75 grantees, were announced in November 1998. Round 3 awards totaling almost \$240 million to 64 grantees were announced in September 1999.

Funds from both types of grants may be used to help move eligible individuals into jobs by: job creation through public or private sector wage subsidies; on-the-job training; contracts with public or private providers of job readiness, job placement, and post-employment services; job vouchers for similar services; community service or work experience; or job retention and supportive services, such as child support and transportation assistance (if such services are not otherwise available).

[For more information on the welfare-to-work grants and for other welfare-to-work information, see the DOL Employment and Training Administration's "Welfare-to-Work" home page at <http://wtw.doleta.gov/>.]

Assisting Women Moving from Welfare to Work, and Assisting Employers.

Women's Bureau Regional Outreach. Since passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, regional offices of the Department of Labor Women's Bureau have intensified their efforts to provide information and educational outreach to help women move off welfare. They have highlighted innovative welfare-to-work programs and conducted conferences directly targeting welfare recipients. In addition, regional offices are -- or have been involved in -- efforts to:

- C Provide employers with information and technical assistance, encouraging them to hire women moving from welfare to work.
- C Encourage training and employment in jobs, including nontraditional jobs for women, which pay a livable wage.
- C Coordinate efforts with DOL's Employment and Training Administration to identify and promote best practices in training.
- C Support the provision of services to enable women's success in moving from welfare to work.
- C Encourage development of mentoring programs.
- C Hold welfare-to-work leadership forums to develop strategies and approaches for resolving "real life" issues confronting welfare recipients entering the workforce.
 - Develop brochures, translating TANF into laywoman's terms, on recipients' rights and obligations under the law.
- C Meet with women receiving TANF benefits and participants in welfare-to-work programs to determine their real life experiences and any policy implications.
- C Develop partnerships with women's organizations, academia, unions and other community-based organizations to highlight welfare-to-work issues and execute projects.
- C Inform constituents about the opportunity to apply for Department of Labor Welfare to Work Competitive Grants to Local Communities; supply DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) with mailing lists of women's and other community-based organizations that may have an interest in a pre-bidder conference for these Grants; and promote ETA's February 1999 technical assistance satellite conferences to assist community-based organizations to develop effective Grant proposals.

Technical Assistance to Small Businesses. The Department of Labor's Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) provides small businesses with technical assistance on how to hire welfare-to-work recipients. In 1997, OSBP published *Hiring Welfare-to-Work Employees: A Step-by-Step Guide for Small Businesses* (updated March 1999). The Guide is available on the Internet at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/osbp>. It can also be accessed via the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) "Welfare to Work" website at <http://wtw.doleta.gov/>.

Rural Women. The Employment and Training Administrations's Office of Welfare-to-Work has formed a partnership with the Welfare Information Network (WIN), a foundation funded project to

help organizations and individuals obtain the information, policy analysis, and technical assistance they need to develop and implement welfare reforms that will reduce dependency and promote the well-being of children and families. In 1999, they teamed up with ETA's Office of Indian and Native American programs and National Rural Development Partnership, and the Rural Policy Research Institute (founded by Iowa State University, the University of Missouri, and the University of Nebraska) to develop a website dedicated to rural issues and the needs of rural welfare-to-work grantees. The website is at <http://www.welfareinfo.org/rural.htm>.

Research on Welfare Reform Issues.

Training and Employment. In 1998, the Employment and Training Administration funded three projects of the Institute for Women's Policy Research. These projects, completed in 1999, included:

- C *Creating Job Training and Education Opportunities for Improved Wages and Job Retention in a Work First Environment: A Review of Research Findings and Analysis of Their Implications for Program Design and Policy.*
- C *The Labor Force Experiences of Women Who Leave Welfare: A Review of the Research Literature with Policy Recommendations.*
- C *Training in Nontraditional Jobs for Women Under Welfare Reform: A Review of the Research Literature, Innovative Programs, and Promising Practices.*

African American Women. In April 1999, the Delta Research and Educational Foundation, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau co-sponsored a research forum entitled "Welfare to Work Legislation and the Implications for African American Women." The forum examined the impact of the current welfare-to-work legislation on African American women and explored ways to improve their situation. The Secretary of Labor presented the keynote address to 500 attendees. A video of the conference was produced to capture and preserve the contributions to public policy research at the forum.

FROM WELFARE TO WORK: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

In March 1997, the President issued a Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies directing the implementation of a federal hiring program for welfare recipients moving from welfare to work.

From Welfare to Work in the Federal Government Initiative.

In 1997, the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration launched its "From Welfare to Work in the Federal Government" initiative. Its objective is to put welfare recipients to work in the federal government by providing federal agencies with tools and resources to facilitate their recruitment, hiring and retention. A key component is the Worker Training and Assistance Program

(WTAP), a comprehensive training and development program to provide new employees moving from welfare to work with the skills to be successful in government employment. WTAP consists of 34 training modules and four volumes (Orientation, Workplace Skills, Transition Skills, and Managerial Component) designed to provide new hires with the requisite skills for managing their transition to the world of work. It includes a training component for managers and supervisors to familiarize them with the goals of WTAP and support services available to their newly hired employees. Federal and state agencies, including non-profit community based programs have utilized the training design and materials to facilitate training for their welfare-to-work hires. At the inception of the WTAP program, DOL was instrumental in conducting the training for several agencies, including the Departments of State and Justice, the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Credit Union Administration. The training program can be accessed on DOL's "From Welfare to Work in the Federal Government" website at <http://wtw.doleta.gov/ohrw2w/index.htm>.

Recruiting, Hiring and Promoting.

The Department of Labor continues to be successful in recruiting and hiring qualified individuals from the welfare rolls. DOL has established extensive partnerships with State, local, community-based, and religious organizations and private industry councils throughout the country. Through this strategy, DOL hired 161 individuals (90 percent of them women), significantly exceeding its 1997 two-year hiring commitment of 120. All of the hires have been promoted and have access to a full array of career counseling services through the Department's Career Assistance Centers. DOL conducts quarterly meetings with the hires to ascertain their career development needs and holds periodic meetings with local service providers to discuss child care, health insurance, and housing issues. DOL also offers a nationwide counseling and referral service to assist in balancing the needs of work and family, as well as a transit subsidy to offset transportation costs.

B. Education and Training of Women

B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 funds partnerships that bring together schools, employers, postsecondary institutions, parents, students, and community organizations in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. STW partnerships offer young people rigorous academic coursework tied to high academic standards, integrated with real-life learning and linked to postsecondary and career options. These activities are designed to meet the needs of a wide range of students: male and female, academically talented youth, at-risk and out-of-school youth, youth with disabilities, and youth for whom English is a second language. Funding, channeled through the Departments of Education and Labor, for States and communities was \$100 million in FY 1994, \$245 million in FY 1995, \$350 million in FY 1996, \$400 million in FY 1997, \$400 million in FY 1998, and \$250 million in FY 1999.

School to Work strategies include:

- Outreach and Awareness for Female Students. STW partnerships expose young women to a wide range of postsecondary and career options. Specific strategies that focus on introducing young women to nontraditional careers include presentations by female role models and current students in nontraditional occupations and classes; recruitment flyers picturing women, with their testimonials; hands-on career laboratories targeted towards women; and information about salaries and career ladders.
- Career Information and Advising. Recruitment of young women can be supported by career information showing women in a wide variety of occupations. Career interest inventories, administered *after* career exploration, can be useful to help women learn to picture themselves in diverse occupations. Counselors identify various interests and skills, in addition to prior coursework and job experience, as a base for career paths.
- Training for Teachers and Counselors. STW initiatives emphasize training offering teachers techniques to increase the participation and achievement of young women, particularly in math and science; to present nontraditional career options to women; and to help students deal with sexual harassment and discrimination.
- Math and Science Education. Contextual and experiential learning from early grade school improves math and science attainment for both young women and men, and keeps young

women in the math and science pipeline. Young women also benefit from the presence of women role models and other adults who have high expectations for their achievement in these fields.

- Links with At-Risk and Out-of-School Programs. To serve at-risk young women, partnerships often include alternative schools and out-of-school programs. Sponsors include girl's clubs, universities, museums, and professional associations of women.
- Parental Involvement. Partnerships offer workshops or brochures to help parents or guardians support their daughters' academic achievements and their pursuit of nontraditional careers, including enrolling daughters in out-of-school math and science programs and encouraging their use of computers. Through STW, parents/guardians can meet women in nontraditional occupations and others who support these efforts.
- Gender Equity. In order to receive STW Implementation funds, each state was required to involve the Carl Perkins Act Gender Equity coordinator in the partnership that designed and implemented its State Plan. States were also required to present goals and methods for helping young women participate in STW activities that would lead to employment in high-performance, high-paying jobs, including nontraditional careers, as well as methods to ensure work and learning environments free from racial and sexual harassment.
- Engaging Employers and Unions. Employers, employees and labor organizations offer various activities that help engage young women, including career information; work-based experiences ranging from introductory job-shadowing to rigorous apprenticeship programs; workplace safety training; and expert mentors.

For more information on School to Work, contact the STW National Learning and Information Center at 1-800-251-7236, or visit the School-to-Work web site at <http://www.stw.ed.gov>.

[See also "Employment and Training Programs" in Section F.4.]

C. Women and Health

C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services.

LEGAL ACCESS AND PROTECTION

Length of Hospital Stays Following Childbirth.

In October 1998, in conjunction with the Departments of the Treasury and Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor published interim regulations under the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act, a law placing decisions affecting the length of hospital stays following childbirth in the hands of mothers and attending providers. [For more information, see DOL's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/>.]

Reconstructive Surgery Following Mastectomy.

In May 1999, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor published a Request For Information under the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act, a law providing protections for breast cancer patients who elect breast reconstruction following a mastectomy. [For more information, see the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/>.]

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS

Women's Health Benefits Information Day.

In November 1998, the Secretary of Labor held a Women's Health Benefits Information Day. She announced new initiatives, including publications and a nationwide customer service day, to help make women in America aware of their new rights under recent health care laws and help them understand basic rules affecting their health benefit programs. She also announced new guidance and rights under the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act and Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act. As part of her outreach on these initiatives, the Secretary held a press roundtable with women's magazines in order to reach women health care consumers. [The National Customer Service Day was held March 20, 1999.]

Health Benefits Education Campaign.

In December 1998, the Secretary of Labor launched the Department's Health Benefits Education Campaign to help workers understand their health benefits and their rights under the law, especially when they experience changes in their lives such as marriage, childbirth, job layoff or retirement and need to make important decisions. Over 70 public and private organizations are partnering with DOL in this ongoing Campaign.

Providing Information to Dislocated Workers.

In October 1998, DOL's Women's Bureau and PWBA distributed to over 10,000 women's organizations and employers the PWBA booklet, *Pension and Health Care Coverage... Questions and Answers for Dislocated Workers*. PWBA published this booklet to provide information about employee benefits to workers who become unemployed. Faced with a plant closing or downsizing, dislocated workers are often forced into a life-altering time of crisis for themselves and their families when they need quick and accurate responses to critical questions involving their health and pension benefits.

Publications on Health Care Benefits for Women.

The Department of Labor's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration (PWBA) provides the following information on health care benefits for women:

- A Q & A booklet (*Questions and Answers: Recent Changes in Health Care Law*), revised in June 1999, which includes information on the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996 and the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998.
- Brochures highlighting major life and work cycle events and the health benefit laws to consider at those times.
- Fact sheets and other publications explaining women's rights to their health care benefits.

These publications are available free of charge through PWBA's toll-free publication number (1-800-998-7542) as well as on PWBA's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/>.

C.2. Strengthen preventive programs that promote women's health.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Preventing Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders.

Each year more than 225,000 women miss work because of musculoskeletal injuries related to their jobs. Severely injured women may never be able to return to their jobs or handle simple, everyday tasks like combing their hair or picking up a baby. Women comprise 70 percent of those suffering from carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), a significant ergonomics problem. Studies show this to be a result of the predominance of women in certain jobs (e.g., data entry, sewing machine operator, cashier) which may lead to CTS. Nearly 90 percent of nursing aides, orderlies and attendants and more than 90 percent of registered nurses are women, and health care workers also suffer an undue percentage of back strains from lifting patients.

In February 1999, the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) asked for public comments on its draft proposed ergonomics programs rule designed to prevent work-related musculoskeletal disorders. OSHA published its proposed ergonomics rule in November 1999.

Initiatives to Improve the Health of Health Care Workers.

Among OSHA initiatives to improve the health and safety of health care workers, particularly occupations where women predominate (e.g., registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nurses aides, health care aides, and dental assistants) are actions to prevent (1) tuberculosis (TB); (2) injuries from needlesticks and other sharps; and (3) natural rubber latex allergy.

1. Preventing Tuberculosis. In 1996, OSHA issued guidelines for the prevention of TB. Then, in 1997, OSHA published a proposal to require employers to protect health care and other workers from exposure to TB; public hearings were held in 1998. OSHA is analyzing the rulemaking record for TB and completing a final standard on TB exposure. OSHA will continue to work with the Department of Health and Human Services (Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, and the Surgeon General's Office of Smoking and Health) to protect health care workers from contracting TB.

2. Preventing Injuries from Needlesticks and other Sharps. Health care workers are at risk for injuries from needlesticks, with nurses reporting the most frequent exposure to accidental injury. Injuries from contaminated needles may result in the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and other bloodborne pathogens. In order to assess the state-of-the-art regarding safer needle devices and to determine what additional actions may be needed to protect health care workers, OSHA published a Request for Information (RFI) in the *Federal Register* in September 1998. OSHA received approximately 400 comments in response to this RFI, and based on these comments, the agency is pursuing several approaches to minimize risks from needlestick injuries.

3. Preventing Natural Rubber Latex Allergy. In 1999, OSHA issued *Technical Information Bulletin: Potential for Allergy to Natural Rubber Latex Gloves and other Natural Rubber Products*. The use of NRL products may result in several varieties of reactions. These reactions can vary, including localized redness and rash; nasal, sinus, and eye symptoms; asthmatic manifestations, including cough, wheeze, shortness of breath, and chest tightness; and rarely, systemic reactions with swelling of the face, lips, and airways, that may progress rapidly to shock, and potentially, death. NRL is found in a variety of products, including gloves, airway masks, medication vial tops, anesthesia bags, various catheters, supplies for intravenous drug use, dental dams, balloons, and other products. In particular, health care workers are exposed to NRL, especially through the use of NRL gloves.

NRL glove use in health care settings has risen dramatically since the mid-1980's, due to the increased threat of contracting HIV, Hepatitis B, and other infectious agents, and the resulting need for barrier protection when delivering health care to patients. With the increased use of NRL gloves, there has been a notable increase in reported NRL allergies among health care workers. OSHA physicians and other personnel have received numerous letters and telephone calls from health care workers whose careers have been ruined and lives forever changed by the onset of NRL allergies. In response to these concerns, OSHA developed its Technical Information Bulletin to assist OSHA field staff in responding to the many questions and concerns expressed by both employers and employees.

OSHA has collaborated with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other agencies in the

Department of Health and Human Services to assure coordinated activities addressing the health hazards associated with exposure to NRL. For example, in 1998, OSHA co-sponsored an educational outreach program on NRL allergy which was spearheaded by the FDA. The FDA joined with OSHA, NIOSH, the CDC, and other agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the National Institutes of Health, to sponsor “Natural Rubber Latex Allergy: Recognition, Prevention, and Treatment,” a program broadcast live via satellite. These government agencies co-sponsored the conference with private-sector partners, including the American Nurses Association, the American Dental Association, the American Hospital Association, and a number of NRL glove manufacturers.

OSHA’s web page is located at <http://www.osha.gov/>.

D. Violence Against Women

D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

Worker Exploitation Task Force.

In early 1998, the President tapped the Solicitor of Labor and the Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights to serve as co-chairs of his “Worker Exploitation Task Force.” This Task Force meets regularly and has been developing a strategy for combating egregious cases of worker exploitation. Examples of such cases are those in which female workers have been exploited and those in which undocumented foreign nationals have been lured into the United States and then abused. These cases also frequently involve allegations of involuntary servitude. Serving on the task force in addition to the co-chairs are other representatives of the Department of Justice (Civil Rights Division, Violence Against Women Office, Office for Victims of Crime, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Immigration and Naturalization Service) and the Department of Labor, as well as the State Department.

Violence in the Workplace.

Homicide is the leading cause of work-related death for women. OSHA issued *Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers* in 1996 and *Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late Night Retail Establishments* in 1998. OSHA continues to conduct outreach and education efforts to assist employers in protecting their establishments from violence. OSHA’S workplace violence homepage has the most up-to-date statistics and links to other sites on this topic. OSHA’s homepage is at <http://www.osha.gov>.

F. Women and the Economy

F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.

PROMOTING RETIREMENT SECURITY

Education and Outreach Program.

In 1996, the Secretary of Labor, as part of the Department of Labor's Retirement Savings Education Campaign, launched a women's outreach program with a new brochure, *Women and Pensions: What Women Need to Know and Do*, and companion information providing basic facts about retirement benefits, resources for additional information, and practical tips on saving for retirement. Since May 1997, DOL's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration has taken the following steps:

- C Worked with the National Association of Women Business Owners to distribute materials to their members throughout the country on retirement savings options for small businesses.
- Partnered with the Girl Scouts of America to encourage young women to consider the importance of saving for retirement.
- C Translated *Women and Pensions: What Women Need to Know and Do* into Spanish in order to help make Hispanic-American women aware of these important issues.
- C Coordinated the first National Summit on Retirement Savings, held in June 1998 in Washington, D.C.. The purpose was to increase public awareness of the importance of retirement planning and to identify ways to promote greater retirement savings by all Americans.
- C Distributed materials to WEB, Inc. (an association of employee benefits professionals) and various state bar associations regarding "qualified domestic relations orders."
- Distributed a public service announcement to newspapers nationwide highlighting the challenges that women face in saving for retirement, in order to make women aware of the educational materials the Department has developed about their pension plan rights and the importance of saving.
- Participated in the September 1999 National Association of Women in Construction Conference to discuss with small employers the benefits of establishing retirement plans for their employees, making them aware of the educational materials and assistance the Department of Labor provides, and distributing DOL materials on pension plan options for small employers.

- Beginning in 1998, cosponsored (with the National Association of State Treasurers) the national roll-out of the “Everywoman’s Money” conferences in over 20 states to educate women on how to be financially independent now and in the future.
- Highlighted, especially in speeches and other outreach activities, the impact that pay inequity has on women’s pension plan savings as another reason women need to be informed about their pension benefit rights and the need to save for retirement.

PWBA continues to target minorities and women to provide information and education regarding the importance of saving for a secure retirement and has established a Strategic Goal to increase the pension and health care coverage in these groups. Also, PWBA plans to conduct research, analysis, and planning in the employee benefit plan area to support the development of policy and legislative initiatives that expand pension and health care coverage to even more American workers and their families.

[For more information, see PWBA’s home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/>.]

Satellite Conference on Women and Retirement Security.

As part of the national discussion on Social Security, in October 1998 the President hosted a roundtable discussion on women and retirement security at the White House. The discussion was broadcast to one satellite site in each of the ten federal regions. The Vice President and a national panel also participated in the event. The Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau and Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration regional offices assisted the Social Security Administration in reaching out to women constituents and organizing satellite downlink sites as well as serving on local panels, which took place after the satellite event.

Insuring Defined Benefit Pension Plans of Private Employers.

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) is a wholly owned federal corporation, established by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) to insure benefits of workers and retirees in defined benefit pension plans of private employers. The PBGC guarantees payment of plan benefits, subject to statutory guarantee limitations, when the employer maintaining the plan is in financial distress and unable to complete funding the plan. The PBGC becomes trustee of terminated underfunded plans and takes over administration of the plan. Benefits are funded by plan assets, premiums paid by insured plans, recoveries from employers that terminate underfunded plans, and investment income. In the case of multiemployer plans (collectively bargained plans maintained by more than one employer), PBGC provides financial assistance loans to those plans that cannot meet their benefit obligations. It has a Board of Directors consisting of the Secretaries of Labor (Chair), Commerce, and the Treasury.

PBGC protects the pensions of more than 42 million workers and retirees (and, in most cases, their surviving spouses) in about 44,000 ongoing private defined benefit pension plans. PBGC's best estimate, based on Current Population Survey data, is that women constitute approximately 36.0

percent of those insured -- about 13.6 million (42.6 percent) of the almost 32 million active workers, and about 1.6 million (15.4 percent) of the approximately 10 million retirees.

In fiscal year 1998 PBGC was the trustee for over 2,600 terminated underfunded pension plans. The agency paid out \$848 million in retirement benefits to 216,000 people, including almost 73,000 women (almost 35 percent). Another 263,000 people are scheduled to receive benefits when they eventually retire, including about 82,000 women (31 percent). The 82,000 figure understates the number of women who will eventually receive benefits from PBGC because it does not include those who will receive benefits as survivors of currently living male plan participants.

PBGC initiatives of special benefit to women include:

- Guaranteeing qualified preretirement survivor annuities. By guaranteeing qualified preretirement survivor annuities, PBGC ensures that surviving spouses will get all the benefits to which they are entitled, even if the pension plan does not have funds to pay the benefit.
- Issuing guidance on drafting qualified domestic relations orders for plans that are trustee by PBGC. Its guide on qualified domestic relations orders (issued September 1996) helps attorneys and other professionals correctly draft domestic relations orders dividing pension benefits between the plan participant and a former spouse.

The PBGC web site is at <http://www.pbgc.gov/>.

UNWAGED WORK

Time-Use Surveys.

In the summer of 1997, the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) conducted a pilot study of two alternative versions of a time-use survey using a telephone methodology. The goal of the study was to examine the feasibility of using computer-assisted telephone interview methodology to derive estimates of nonmarket work. In the pilot, nonmarket work included housework, home maintenance, child and elder care, food production, and volunteer work. The research design included cognitive interviews to enhance understanding of how U.S. respondents react to government-sponsored time-use surveys; and developmental work to design optimal survey procedures for measuring nonmarket work. The field test assessed survey costs, response rates, and coding reliability. Two versions of a survey questionnaire were tested. Both versions asked what the respondent was doing and when the activity started and ended. One version also asked who else was with the respondent and the location of the activity; the other version asked whether the respondent was doing anything else at the same time.

Based on the encouraging results of the pilot study, BLS established an internal working group to examine the feasibility of conducting a full-scale time-use survey. Although the work is still in progress,

the group is focusing on the possibility of using subsamples of outgoing rotation groups of the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) to estimate the time individuals spend in various activities, taking advantage of the wealth of information already collected in the CPS on earnings, hours of work, and other demographic and family characteristics.

Conferences, Meetings, and Publications.

BLS and the MacArthur Network on the Family and the Economy cosponsored a conference of researchers in the field on Time Use, Non-Market Work, and Family Well-being in Washington, D.C. in November 1997. The conference was videotaped and a conference summary was prepared. BLS staff sent copies of the summary to the President's Interagency Council on Women for distribution to appropriate NGOs and other organizations.

In May 1999, the National Academy of Sciences hosted a workshop on the subject of time-use data. This workshop included a session devoted to the recent BLS examination of the feasibility of conducting a time-use survey. Other topics covered at the workshop included an overview of the importance of such data and their value to public policy; an examination of various methods for measuring time use; the determinants of how people spend their time; and the future of time-use measurement.

In an effort to expand the discussion of issues relating to the measurement of time use, BLS staff presented their findings at the August 1999 meetings of the American Statistical Association. The August 1999 issue of the BLS *Monthly Labor Review* contained articles on the theories underlying time use measurement as well as practical considerations in attempting to measure it. The *Monthly Labor Review* is available online at <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/mlrhome.htm>.

F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.

WOMEN VETERANS

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) for Veterans.

The 1990 National Defense Authorization Act authorized comprehensive transition assistance benefits and services for service members separating from active duty and their spouses. From this law, the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) was born. The Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Services (VETS) oversees the program, the objective of which is to prepare separating service members and their spouses with resume preparation, job placement and employment assistance, labor market information, etc.

Since 1998, VETS has been actively working to increase the number of spouses who attend TAP workshops. VETS estimates that about 90 percent of spouses of military personnel are women.

According to a recent study, TAP participants have a better opportunity to quickly reintegrate into the private and public workforce, preventing long-term unemployment and reducing their amount of time collecting unemployment benefits. Participation in TAP increases participants' comfort level with job search activities and improves their chances of finding employment in line with their career interests. The VETS web page is at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets/>.

Grants to Identify and Expand Employment Opportunities.

In 1992, to address the high unemployment rate of women veterans compared to their male counterparts, the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) began an initiative to identify and expand employment opportunities for women veterans. In support of this initiative, in 1993 VETS began providing grants to the Women's Research and Education Institute (WREI).

With VETS grants, WREI has researched military jobs and translated them into civilian language so that it would be easier for women veterans to explain the skills, knowledge and ability they have to employers. It has marketed women veterans to the human resource personnel of large corporations, including organizing a conference of human resource personnel from businesses, trade associations, the Chambers of Commerce, federal contractors, etc. And it has designed a brochure for women veterans that explains various employment opportunities for them; the brochure is distributed at locations frequented by women veterans. With a new grant of almost \$100,000 beginning in February 1999, WREI worked to increase the number of women veterans participating in VETS' telecommunications project, which emphasizes careers as network installers, technicians, and customer relations personnel for leading telecommunications companies. For more information, visit the WREI website at <http://www.wrei.org>.

National Women Veterans Art Design Search.

Beginning in July 1998, the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and Veterans' Employment and Training Services (VETS) sponsored a "National Women Veterans Original Art Design Search." The original art work submissions portrayed the theme, "Hire a Vet: A Model of Success." The winner was announced at the DOL Annual Salute to All American Veterans in November 1999. The final selections will be exhibited in offices where women seek employment and retraining opportunities. The focus of this program is to expand the awareness of the 1.2 million women veterans of the special employment-related benefits available to them as a result of their military service. For more information, visit <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/women.htm>.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC.

The Department of Labor's Deputy Secretary led the U.S. delegation to the first-ever Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministerial Meeting on Women, held in Manila, the Philippines, in October 1998. The delegation included officials from the Departments of Commerce, Education, and Labor, the President's Interagency Council on Women, the U.S. Embassy in Manila, and the AFL-

CIO. Ministers met to consider issues of women in economic development, in response to a mandate from APEC Leaders to “take stock of the progress to date in involving women in APEC’s agenda and to determine next steps to integrate women into the mainstream of APEC activities.”

This ministerial was conceived several years ago when APEC economies were enjoying unparalleled economic success, but came together during a time of financial crisis. Recognizing that women are among the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of economic declines, ministers recommended that APEC place high priority on developing a better understanding of the disproportionate impacts of the financial crisis on women and integrating their interests into economic recovery strategies in the region.

Ministers called for:

- Including gender-based analysis as an integral component of APEC decisions, processes, and activities, and promoting the collection of sex-disaggregated data to support analysis and decision-making.
- Encouraging the involvement of women in all APEC fora, especially in decision making;
- Developing a “Framework for the Integration of Women into APEC” by an APEC task force, to ensure a comprehensive, sustained gender-sensitive approach within APEC and accountability for results.

In 1999, the President’s Interagency Council on Women and the Department of Labor Women’s Bureau participated in the Ad Hoc Task Force to Integrate Women in APEC and provided significant input into its development of the Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC. The Framework promotes gender analysis of APEC policies and programs, increased collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, and increased participation of women in APEC fora; and includes an implementation plan. In September 1999, APEC Leaders approved the Framework and a new two-year Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Gender Integration to advise and assist in the implementation of the Framework. The President’s Interagency Council on Women, the Department of Labor, and the State Department are participating in this Ad Hoc Advisory Group. For more information, see http://www.dol.gov/dol_sec/public/programs/iacw/main.htm.

F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

Federal Procurement Contracts.

The Department of Labor's Office of Small Business Programs is partnering with the Small Business

Administration under a Memorandum of Understanding to increase the participation of women-owned small businesses in prime and subcontracting opportunities at DOL and to foster women's business enterprise in the federal marketplace. Under the MOU, signed in March 1999, the partners will maximize resources to implement many initiatives that will help increase women's share of DOL and federal procurement dollars.

F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

In August 1998, the President signed into law sweeping job training reforms. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provides the framework for a national system of employment preparation and placement services. The Act combines funding and administration for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs serving job seekers and employers. Title I of the legislation contains the following elements: streamlined services; empowered and informed individuals; universal access to services; increased accountability throughout the system; strong roles for local boards; state and local flexibility; and improved youth programs.

WIA incorporates many of the best elements of pilot/demonstration projects that the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has been involved with for many years, including payment for training through Individual Training Accounts, specialized training for incumbent workers, and comprehensive services for youth.

WIA creates a nationwide network of One-Stop centers where customers can conveniently access employment, education, training and information services they need at a single location. Among its advantages, One-Stop shopping is family-friendly, enabling women entering or transitioning in the labor force who also have family responsibilities to most efficiently use their time and energy to find appropriate work and training. Partner programs authorized or carried out under 12 separate federal funding streams provide a comprehensive menu of activities and services for all job seekers and workers, including women, to find appropriate work and training.

The Department of Labor's Women's Bureau is working collaboratively with ETA on WIA implementation. In 1999, the Bureau trained its regional offices on the implications of the Act for women and equipped them with the information needed to activate local women's organizations in the state and local planning process. The Bureau is working to ensure that One-Stop centers provide information about nontraditional training for women and understand the importance to women of supportive services such as child care and transportation. There will be an ongoing effort by the Women's Bureau to make sure the WIA system works well for women.

The Department of Labor Civil Rights Center is issuing regulations to implement the provisions in Section 188 on nondiscrimination in the provision of services. This provision prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, in addition to other grounds.

For more information on WIA, visit the Workforce Investment Act web page at <http://usworkforce.org>.

Formula-funded Youth Programs under the Workforce Investment Act.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) provides for formula-funded youth programs. These programs replace Job Training Partnership Act Youth Training Grants and Summer Youth Employment and Training with a single funding stream that provides local flexibility to support a wide range of coordinated activities and services. Programs focus on providing at-risk youth with assistance in both academic and occupational learning; developing leadership skills; and preparing for further education and training leading to eventual employment. They provide work experience activities for youth during the summer months as well as year-round. The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration funds these programs in the form of grants to local areas via their States. Program year 1999 funds totaled \$1.0 billion. It is anticipated that approximately 575,000 youth ages 14-21 will receive services in Program Year 2000.

WIA creates local youth councils responsible for recommending and coordinating policies and programs within a specific geographic area. These youth councils play a key role in the design and delivery of services at the local level. For more information, see <http://usworkforce.org/>.

Youth Opportunity Grants.

Initiated in 1996, this Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration pilot program addresses the pervasive joblessness of out-of-school youth ages 16-24 living in high poverty urban and rural areas. The goal is to increase the employment of these youth from below 50 percent to 80 percent over five years. Related goals include reducing dropout rates, teenage pregnancy, and crime. In 1996, grants were awarded to Chicago, Houston and Los Angeles (with women 56 percent of enrollees at these sites). In 1997, grants were awarded to Boston, New York, and rural Kentucky. In FY 1998, \$25 million was awarded to continue the six existing pilots and expand the initiative to an additional five sites: Baltimore, Denver, Detroit, Oakland, and San Diego. For FY 1999, \$250 million was appropriated for grants to select scores of new sites for Youth Opportunity grants.

This initiative saturates the local community by making employment and training services available to all unemployed youth who reside in the community, and by establishing an integrated administrative structure with other service providers who are already located in the community.

Early results of baseline data and follow-up surveys, indicate that about half of the out-of-school youth living in the target areas are receiving services. For more information, see the Employment and Training Administration website at <http://www.doleta.gov>.

Youth Opportunity (YO!) Movement.

In July 1999, the President launched the Youth Opportunity (YO!) Movement with the assistance of the Secretary of Labor and leaders from the business, foundation and entertainment communities. The vision of the YO! Movement is that all youth, particularly those who are out of school, acquire the necessary skills and work experience to successfully transition into adulthood, careers, further education, and training. It is an all-encompassing strategy of the Department of Labor, working through local communities to build partnerships between government, community-and faith-based organizations, business leaders, and youth. It is a new effort to help out-of-school youth living in high-poverty areas obtain employment training and educational opportunities to find jobs and develop careers. It is also, with other DOL youth programs, part of a coordinated federal interagency strategy for addressing youth violence. The YO! Movement focuses on the “whole person” and engages the whole community to bridge gaps and break cycles that lead to poverty and despair.

The Youth Opportunity grant sites described above are part of this Movement. The YO! Movement website, <http://www.yomovement.org/>, contains information on the Youth Opportunity grants competition; a state-by-state listing of DOL supported youth programs; and the most up-to-the-minute information on activities. The Movement includes a mentoring component for which DOL’s Women’s Bureau developed materials.

The Quantum Opportunity Program.

Initially funded in 1995, the Quantum Opportunity Program (QOP) was a four-year intervention designed to help prepare at-risk youth for successful careers as adults. The program defined “successful careers” as careers that provide financial security, professional advancement, and personal fulfillment.” QOP was intended to help participants reach this goal by 1) helping youth succeed in high school; 2) assisting youth to enroll in post-secondary education or training; 3) guiding youth to resist behaviors that often become barriers to successfully completing their education and entering the labor market; and 4) imparting to youth basic life skills needed for successful careers. The program’s young women received information helpful in preventing teenage pregnancy; an introduction to nontraditional careers for women; and a caring adult mentor responsible for guiding them through the challenges of secondary school. This mentoring relationship was intended to assist each young woman in maintaining or developing high self-esteem and recognizing that she can succeed.

In 1995, the Department of Labor and the Ford Foundation jointly provided grants to seven sites: Philadelphia; Washington, DC; Cleveland; Memphis; Houston; Forth Worth; and Yakima Valley, Washington. Project evaluation will determine the impact of the program.

The Job Corps.

Begun in 1964, the Job Corps is the nation’s largest and most comprehensive residential training program, providing basic education, vocational training, counseling, medical care, and related support services for disadvantaged youth ages 16-24. Post-program placement services are also offered to assist students with employment or further education. There are 118 Job Corps Centers.

The Job Corps has taken steps to increase the participation of young women in its programs, including:

targeted recruitment brochures for females; brochures and posters depicting young women in non-traditional trades; provision of on-site child care at a number of Job Corps Centers; institution of a zero tolerance policy for violence and drugs; and institution of a requirement that all Job Corps centers provide training on sexual harassment for staff and students. The Job Corps' goal is to enroll approximately 35,000 young women annually. For more information, see the Job Corps web site at <http://www.jobcorps.org/>.

Displaced Homemaker Demonstration Projects.

As part of a larger dislocated workers demonstration program, from 1996 to 1998 three projects focused on providing employment and supportive services to displaced homemakers in Oklahoma, Montana, and Oregon. Displaced homemakers were defined as individuals who had been providing unpaid services to family members at home, were unemployed or underemployed, needed employment assistance, and had been dependent on public assistance or the income of another family member. While the population served by these projects was overwhelmingly female adults, a few males adults were also included. A substantial number of those served were welfare recipients.

In addition to lack of specific marketable skills, many individuals lacked knowledge of labor market functioning or had personal issues requiring attention for a successful transition to paid employment. As a result, the projects offered, in addition to skills training, various courses in life skills dealing with self-esteem, substance abuse, parenting, and relationships; leadership skills; team training; time management; and related areas. Supportive services, particularly child care and transportation, also were utilized significantly by project participants.

Surveys were conducted at 13 weeks after an individual's termination from the project to determine their employment and wage level status. Among the three projects, employment rates were 64, 66, and 83 percent, respectively, compared with a demonstration program target rate of 70 percent. Wage rates exceeded the demonstration program target rate.

Child Development Training.

The Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) is the registration agency for more than 850 occupations including Child Care Development Specialist (CCDS). Registered apprentices receive on-the-job training under the guidance of an experienced mentor and related theoretical classroom instruction throughout their apprenticeship. Recognized as apprenticeable in 1978, CCDS programs have been established in 19 States. Graduates receive a nationally recognized credential. The Department of Labor considers improving the wages and retention rate of providers in this occupation a high priority. To this end BAT developed an initiative to expand the CCDS model into at least 10 additional States during Program Year 1999. The CCDS grant process provides States the seed money to build a sustainable collaborative statewide system of provider training. For more information, see the BAT home page at <http://www.doleta.gov/bat/>.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Cooperative Agreement with Northern Ireland on Labor Market Issues.

The U.S. Department of Labor signed a cooperative agreement with the Northern Ireland Training and Employment Agency in September 1998 at the Northern Ireland “Vital Voices: Women in Democracy” Conference in Belfast. In the agreement, both agencies recognized the need to improve women’s access to labor market services and training opportunities to better prepare them to respond to opportunities created by economic globalization. The parties agreed to explore several labor market related initiatives providing opportunities to learn from each other. They include:

- C Broadening one-stop shopping approaches and contacts to study other models that may be helpful.
- Providing labor market information electronically.
- Continuing the on-going relationships between the U.S. Department of Labor-administered Job Corps and Northern Ireland to improve the quality of community relations and vocational training.

In implementing this Agreement, the Northern Ireland Training and Employment Agency organized a U.S. study tour, which took place in May 1999. ETA hosted four focus groups: the Unemployed; Disabilities Policies; Youth; and Lifelong Learning. They toured facilities and met with government and nonprofit organization representatives, employers, and employees. They finished their U.S. tour at the U.S. Department of Labor headquarters in Washington, D.C.; where they shared their experiences with each other and the Family Friendly Policies focus group also participating in the U.S. tour, and drafted an action plan to implement positive change when they returned home. This project is ongoing.

F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities.

In 1998, Executive Order 13078 created the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. Its purpose is to develop -- through coordinated cross-federal agency efforts -- a national policy designed to bring adults with disabilities into gainful, competitive employment at a rate that is as close as possible to that of the general adult population. The Task Force is required to issue four formal reports to the President. *Re-charting the Course: First Report of the Presidential Task Force* was issued in 1998; the final report is due in July 2002.

In accordance with the Executive Order, the Task Force operates as a multi-agency board with the Secretary of Labor as chair. The membership of the Task Force includes the Secretaries of Education, Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, Commerce, Treasury, and Transportation; the Director of the Office of Personnel Management; the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration; the

Administrator of the Small Business Administration; and the Chairs of the Federal Communications Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the President's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, and the National Council on Disability. The Task Force is housed at the Department of Labor. A budget of approximately \$2.4 million was appropriated for its first full fiscal year.

The Task Force is authorized and encouraged to make policy recommendations that cover a broad spectrum of disability issues: civil rights, discrimination, and enforcement; reasonable accommodation (architectural, assistive technology, and accessibility to programs, services, and information); access to health care; consumer-driven supports and services including, for example, accessible housing, transportation, child care, community services, and on-the-job supports; vocational rehabilitation; economic incentives to work; and educational and training services. During FY 1999, seven interagency committees were formed to help carry out the Task Force agenda: Access to Employment & Lifelong Learning; Employment Opportunities for Young People with Disabilities; Health Care and Income Support; Economic Incentives and Entrepreneurship; Civil Rights; Statistics; and the Federal Government as a Model Employer. The particular concerns and needs of women with disabilities are being integrated throughout the work of the committees.

In order to carry out its mandate of developing a bold and aggressive national disability employment policy, the Task Force often acts as a catalyst and facilitator for ensuring active and ongoing interagency collaboration. The Task Force, therefore, works closely with the Department of Labor Women's Bureau regarding the Bureau's representation on various Task Force-sponsored committees and supports the Women's Bureau in its ongoing efforts related to the needs of women with disabilities and women caregivers of family members with disabilities.

For more information, see the PTFEAD website at http://www.dol.gov/dol_sec/public/programs/ptfead/main.htm.

Workforce Recruitment Program.

Coordinated by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) and the U.S. Department of Defense, the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) is designed to provide summer and permanent job opportunities in federal government and private sector businesses to college students with disabilities. Each year, recruiters interview about 1,000 students with disabilities at colleges and university campuses across the nation, and develop a data base listing the qualifications of each student. Access is provided to agencies and businesses who then make direct job offers to students whose skills fit the employers' job openings.

The Workforce Recruitment Program is the evolution of a program previously run solely by the Department of Defense that has placed students with disabilities in summer and permanent jobs in that agency since 1976. The expanded program has thrived, successfully placing students in ever more diverse types of work. In 1999, WRP recruiters traveled to over 125 colleges and universities around the country, interviewed more than 1,100 students, and compiled a database of student information that

was shared with interested agencies and businesses in mid-March. Over 300 students from the database were placed in jobs this year. At least 50 percent of participants are female. For more information visit www.pcepd.gov.

FEDERAL CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

The Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) focuses significant enforcement efforts on sex discrimination. OFCCP enforces three equal employment opportunity laws: Executive Order 11246 (issued by President Johnson in 1965), as amended; Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the affirmative action provisions of the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended. Taken together, they prohibit discrimination on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, and status as a Vietnam era veteran, special disabled veteran, or veteran who served in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; and require affirmative action in employment by federal contractors and subcontractors. Federal contractors employ approximately 22 percent of the labor force.

In administering the laws, OFCCP conducts approximately 4,000 compliance evaluations per year to investigate contractors' systemic employment practices. Compliance evaluations range from a review of the contractor's records to a comprehensive analysis of a contractor's employment practices and affirmative action efforts. These evaluations work both to prevent sex discrimination and to require employers to examine the stereotypical thinking that often impedes women's progress.

Regulatory Reform.

Beginning in 1994, OFCCP began changing its regulations to improve its effectiveness in conducting compliance evaluations and complaint investigations. OFCCP now has the flexibility to tailor investigations to apparent problems and refrain from further investigation where there are no indications of violations. OFCCP is drafting other significant improvements to its regulations. Planned changes include reducing the amount of paperwork produced by contractors while enhancing OFCCP's ability to select contractors for compliance evaluations; and collecting summary compensation data (including comparisons of men's and women's pay) from a larger pool of federal contractors.

Awards.

The EVE Award, initiated in 1983, is presented by OFCCP to those contractors that have demonstrated, through programs or activities, exemplary and innovative efforts to increase the employment opportunities for employees, including minorities, women, individuals with disabilities and covered veterans. The Secretary's Opportunity 2000 Award, initiated in 1988, is presented by the Secretary of Labor to one contractor each year that has established and instituted comprehensive workforce strategies to ensure equal employment opportunity. It is coveted by federal contractors and has gained national recognition as the Department's most prestigious Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) honor. OFCCP hopes to build on an extended public education campaign that amplifies the importance of these awards. The 1999 EEO awards events shared the theme, "Equal Pay Matters."

Glass Ceiling Initiative.

The “glass ceiling” is defined by the Department of Labor as those artificial barriers, based on attitudinal or organizational bias, that prevent qualified women of all races and minority men from advancing in their organization into executive level positions. These artificial barriers may exist in the selection criteria used for hiring or for advancement and professional development opportunities, or may be unspoken in the culture of the corporation. In 1989, OFCCP was charged with implementing the Department’s “Glass Ceiling Initiative.” Since that time, OFCCP has published three reports on the initiative, the most recent of which is *The Glass Ceiling Initiative: Are There Cracks In the Ceiling?* (June 1997).

Since 1989, OFCCP has implemented Corporate Management Reviews to ensure that qualified candidates do not encounter such artificial barriers to advancement. A Corporate Management Review includes all aspects of a standard compliance review, with special attention given to developmental and selection processes and practices for advancement into mid- and upper-level management positions, as well as treatment of women and minorities in such positions.

Pay Equity/Equal Pay Initiative.

The Secretary of Labor’s Equal Pay Initiative, begun in 1999, uses three powerful tools at DOL’s disposal: enforcement, education, and partnership. Beginning in 1999, OFCCP, with assistance from other DOL agencies, will:

- Increase the number of glass ceiling reviews by 10 percent, up to 40 per year.
- Emphasize pay issues in all other OFCCP focused reviews.
- Develop and implement a model enforcement (investigative and litigation) strategy.
- Release a new employer self-audit tool, such as an OFCCP computer self-audit.
- Include pay practices as a component in determining EVE Award recipients.

In response to the Equal Pay Initiative, in 1999 OFCCP updated its internal reporting system to focus on compensation. The three categories for inclusion in this system are:

- Any cases involving findings of compensation discrimination.
- Any cases involving discrimination against women or minorities applying to or working in mid- or upper-level management.
- Any case involving discrimination against women in nontraditional jobs.

Back Pay Relief.

In the past several years, OFCCP has increased the amount of back pay collected on behalf of women who were victims of sex discrimination. OFCCP collected over \$11.4 million on behalf of 2,431 women in Fiscal Year 1997; almost \$16 million for 3,949 women in FY 1998; and over \$8.2 million for 1,870 women in the first half of FY 1999.

Preventing Sexual and Racial Harassment.

OFCCP’s regional offices have worked diligently to reduce the incidence of sexual harassment at

contractor facilities. For example, the Atlanta Regional Office began its Sexual Harassment Initiative in 1995. Activities include training, workshops, conciliation agreements, remedial methods, and placing contractors on an Honor Roll for their voluntary efforts. In 1999, the Atlanta Region participated in three training sessions, four meetings/workshops, two remedial programs, and three conciliation agreements; and placed two contractors on its Honor Roll. In 1998, OFCCP's Atlanta and Chicago Regional Offices posted "Tips For Contractors On Preventing Sexual And Racial Harassment" on their web sites.

The OFCCP home page is at http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/public/ofcp_org.htm.

Memoranda of Understanding between OFCCP and EEOC.

The U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), one on training and one on charge processing. These MOUs will enable them to improve enforcement of the laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace, particularly regarding compensation. The training MOU strengthens enforcement of compensation discrimination cases by providing for the training of agency staff on equal pay laws, as well as facilitating referral and sharing of information on such cases. Cooperation is essential because each agency enforces laws that address discrimination in compensation. The charge processing MOU updates a longstanding agreement between the agencies on the processing of discrimination complaints (including pay discrimination cases) based on race, color, sex, national origin, and religion. The MOU promotes efficient processing of complaints and avoidance of duplication of effort. In addition, the MOU allows OFCCP to seek monetary damages in the voluntary resolution of discrimination complaints involving federal contractors (eliminating the need for complaining parties in such cases to file with EEOC to obtain damages). Both MOUs went into effect in April 1999.

WORKING WOMEN COUNT HONOR ROLL

The Working Women Count Honor Roll campaign was one of the U.S. commitments announced at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Launched by the Department of Labor Women's Bureau, it addressed concerns voiced by more than 250,000 working women across the country who responded to the national Working Women Count! Survey in 1994. During the Honor Roll campaign, the Women's Bureau obtained pledges to initiate new programs or policies that improve women's pay and benefits, help balance work and family, and/or improve women's respect and opportunity on the job. By mid-1996, some 459 nonprofits, 448 businesses, 129 elected government officials, 51 labor unions, 51 media organizations, and two on-line computer services had pledged to make change. By mid-1997, the completion of the program, more than 800 pledges were being implemented. In 1997, the Women's Bureau published its final report, *What Works! The Working Women Count Honor Roll Report*. For more information, call the WB National Resource & Information Center at 1-800-827-5335, or see the Women's Bureau's web page at <http://www2.dol.gov/dol/wb/>.

OTHER EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE WAGE GAP

The Department of Labor's Women's Bureau is working to reduce the wage gap between women and men through new initiatives.

In 1996, the Women's Bureau launched the Fair Pay Clearinghouse (for more information, see the description of the Women's Bureau National Resource and Information Center under H.1).

At the April 1998 White House commemoration of National Equal Pay Day, which recognized new programs and policies to help reduce the wage gap between women and men, Secretary Herman announced new resources from the Women's Bureau. The publications, *Equal Pay Self Audit for Employers* and *Equal Pay Checklist for Working Women*, guide employers in setting equal pay policies and educate women about the steps they themselves can take to achieve equal pay. These tools help employers understand the many ways that compensation systems are vulnerable to unfair bias and guide them on voluntary steps to ensure that they provide equal pay for women.

In June 1998, at a White House ceremony in commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the Equal Pay Act, the President released *Equal Pay: A Thirty-five Year Perspective*. This Women's Bureau report presents an historical analysis of the economic trends affecting women workers from the years leading up to the Equal Pay Act passage through the present. It provides data on women's labor force participation, leading occupations, educational attainment and wages, as well as issues particular to women of color and other important trends.

Other Women's Bureau publications include:

- C *Worth More Than We Earn: Fair Pay for Working Women* (1996), which describes the wage gap, what causes it, and what employers, unions and working women can do to close the wage gap.
- C *What Works: Fair Pay for Working Women* (1996), which profiles employers across the country who have improved pay scales for women (and men) in traditionally female jobs.
- C *Women's Earnings as Percent of Men's* (updated yearly, with wage information from 1979 to the most recent available).

In FY 2000, the Women's Bureau plans to publish:

- *Women's Work Isn't What It Used to Be* (about nontraditional jobs).
- A general career guide for women (how to get the pay you deserve).

In addition, Women's Bureau regional offices are continuing to organize and co-sponsor equal pay events around the country. The Women's Bureau is also engaged in partnership with other government agencies and nonprofit organizations to reduce occupational segregation by promoting opportunities for

women and girls in higher-paying nontraditional occupations.

[For more information, see the Women's Bureau's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/> or call the Women's Bureau's National Resource and Information Center, 1-800-347-3741.]

NONTRADITIONAL JOBS

Many nontraditional occupations – that is, occupations where women make up 25 percent or less of the total workers – are more likely to be associated with high earnings and employee benefits. The Women's Bureau continues to encourage women to consider such occupations as a way of becoming economically self-sufficient. They include not only skilled blue-collar trades in the construction and transportation industries, but also emerging technical occupations in business services, health care, telecommunications, utilities, and other public sector industries. The Women's Bureau and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) have worked together to promote the recruitment, training, and retention of women in apprenticeship and nontraditional occupations.

The Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act of 1991.

This Act amended the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the federal government's major training and placement assistance for workers with employment barriers, to encourage states to broaden the range of training and placement opportunities for women in nontraditional occupations. NEW also called for a demonstration grant program to develop model and exemplary State JTPA programs to train and place women in nontraditional employment. The Women's Bureau administered these grants. Over the four years authorized by the Act, \$6.0 million in grants (\$1.5 million in each of Fiscal Years 1993-96) were awarded, creating a total of 23 projects in 22 states. This funding helped train and place more than 2,500 women.

The Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) Act of 1992.

The Women's Bureau implemented the technical assistance program authorized by WANTO, providing grants to community-based organizations offering technical assistance to private-sector employers and labor unions to prepare them to recruit, train, promote and retain women in apprenticeship and other nontraditional occupations. Through FY 1999, the final year of grants, \$4.714 million was awarded to community-based organizations around the U.S. From FY 1994-98, more than 2,500 employers and labor unions received direct services. Many others received technical assistance indirectly through awareness and orientation sessions, issue-specific workshops, conferences/trade fairs, mailings, talk-media and other print-media sources. For more information, see the WANTO Grant Home Page at <http://www.workplacesolutions.org/about/grantees.cfm>.

WOMEN MILITARY VETERANS

VETS Labor and Employment Specialist Course.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) established the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) in 1986 to provide specialized training and professional

skills enhancement for state employment service agencies and other veterans' service providers' staff. NVTI sponsors a *Labor and Employment Specialist Course*, funded by VETS. The revised course, which began in 1997 and is given several times a year, helps participants develop an awareness and understanding of diversity and sensitivity issues that will result in improved customer service to women and minorities. For more information, visit <http://www-nvti.cudenver.edu>.

WORKING WOMEN'S SUMMITS

Regional Working Women's Summits.

In September 1996, the Women's Bureau held its first regional Working Women's Summits at 20 sites around the country. More than 4,000 women in 20 cities participated in substantive and solution-oriented discussions of child and elder care, the glass ceiling, fair pay, pensions, lifelong learning, downsizing, domestic violence, and workplace flexibility. Working Women Count Honor Roll members were given public recognition; and the Women's Bureau introduced a new public education campaign, "Don't Work in the Dark!". This initiative encourages women to get the facts about women in the labor force; helps them understanding their rights on the job; and increases access to best practices of employers, unions, and organizations nationwide making positive changes in workplaces.

National Working Women's Summit.

The Women's Bureau held a national summit on June 5, 1997 in Washington, DC on "Economic Equity: Realities, Responsibilities and Rewards." The Summit included more than 20,000 participants at 450 downlink sites across the nation, and over 250,000 viewed the broadcast via cable and television networks.

SPECIAL NGO OUTREACH EFFORTS

MOU with the National Council of Negro Women.

During Fiscal Year 1997, the Women's Bureau executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Council of Negro Women and the U.S. Department of Labor to advance the interests of African American women in all aspects of the workforce. The Women's Bureau implements activities under the MOU and monitors DOL's implementation. DOL agencies have been providing ongoing support for NCNW activities through participation in meetings, workshops, seminars, mentoring programs, and dissemination of information on grant opportunities in connection with DOL programs. DOL agencies also keep NCNW informed of DOL activities through mailings, press releases, public service announcements, and other materials.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

U.S.-Mexico Border Workplace Rights Training.

In 1999, as part of the administration of the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (the labor side accord to the North American Free Trade Agreement), the U.S. Secretary of Labor and the Mexican Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare agreed to conduct legal literacy training along the

U.S./Mexico border. In August 1999, the first sessions took place in the U.S. and Mexican cross-border cities of McAllen, Texas and Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. The purpose of the training is to educate workers, employers, government representatives, and non-governmental organizations about the rights and protections afforded women workers in the United States and Mexico. One of the focuses is on pregnancy discrimination. The workforce is predominantly female in the maquiladoras (export processing zones) in Mexico along the U.S. border. The Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) and Women's Bureau took the lead in planning and carrying out the training. For more information, see ILAB's National Administrative Office web site at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/ilab/public/programs/nao/main.htm>.

South Africa.

In 1998, a delegation from South Africa visited the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) for a two-week study tour on employment equity policy development and public outreach/advocacy. The tour's objective was to orient South African Department of Labour officials with U.S. laws, regulations, experiences, and "best practices" in equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, with the hope that this exposure will enable the delegates to adopt similar policies and public outreach programs in their country. In 1999, OFCCP continued its outreach to South Africa when it hosted several delegates from the South African Ministry of Labour. The delegates were interested in finding out how OFCCP uses employment statistics, as well as looking for the most effective ways to use the employer reports they will be receiving in the year 2000.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

Employment in Nontraditional Jobs as Coal Mine Inspectors.

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 requires inspectors to have at least five years of mining experience. This requirement is a contributing factor to the Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA) difficulty in locating and hiring qualified women in these nontraditional jobs.

In 1998, MSHA began partnering with organizations interested in increasing employment for women in nontraditional jobs such as Coal Mine Inspectors, Mining Engineers, and Electrical Engineers. These partners include professional organizations such as Women in Mining and the Coal Employment Project. MSHA shares responsibility to raise awareness, develop programs and institute practices which help accomplish the Agency's goal to increase recruitment and retention of qualified women in nontraditional professions. As a result of this partnering, as well as other efforts, MSHA has instituted the following:

- Advertisizing vacancies at lower GS levels to reach more women.
- Directing MSHA inspectors to use mine inspections as an opportunity to help identify qualified women in the mining industry. As these individuals are identified, MSHA inspectors make them

aware of and encourage them to apply for MSHA Engineer, Electrical and Coal Mine Inspector positions as the positions become available.

- Conducting targeted recruitment of students (especially women) for Mining Engineers, Electrical Engineers and Industrial Hygienists through the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). Each coal district has allocated one existing inspector slot for the SCEP. Once selected, the SCEP participant is placed in a combination on-the-job training and course work plan.
- Sending vacancy announcements to each of the nationwide chapters of women's organizations, such as the Coal Employment Project. This enhances MSHA's efforts to reach women in colleges, universities, and mining communities throughout the nation and promote the advantages of employment in a nontraditional women's field.

Additional informational on this initiative can be found on MSHA's Internet homepage at <http://www.msha.gov>.

F. 6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides important job protections for American families by allowing up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave in a twelve-month period for the birth and care of the newborn child of the employee; for placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care; to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or to take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition. Since enactment of the FMLA, millions of Americans have taken leave for a reason covered by the Act. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division is responsible for administering and enforcing the FMLA. Wage and Hour has now achieved widespread compliance on a voluntary basis in large part by developing "user-friendly" regulations minimizing administrative burden to employers; easy-to-read compliance guides and fact sheets; and interactive electronic compliance assistance programs (e-laws), which are available on the World Wide Web.

Wage and Hour has completed action on more than 13,500 employee complaints. The vast majority of the complaints have been successfully resolved through telephone calls that explained the provisions of the FMLA and steps necessary to remedy the situation.

For more information, see Wage and Hour's "Family and Medical Leave Act" home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/fmla.htm>.

Presidential Memorandum on New Tools to Help Parents Balance Work and Family.

A May 1999 Presidential Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies directed the Secretary of Labor to propose regulations that enable States to develop innovative ways of using the Unemployment Insurance (UI) system to support parents on leave following the birth or adoption of a child. In addition, the President directed the Secretary of Labor to develop model State legislation that States could use in following these regulations. In this effort, the Department of Labor is to evaluate the effectiveness of using the UI system for these or related purposes. In a 1996 study conducted by the Commission on Family and Medical Leave, lost pay was the most significant barrier to parents taking advantage of unpaid leave after the birth or adoption of a child. This new step will help to give States the ability to help eliminate this barrier.

CHILD CARE

White House Conferences on Early Child Development and Child Care.

In April 1997, President Clinton and the First Lady held the White House Conference on Early Child Development and Learning to highlight the benefits of early nurturing by parents. In October 1997, the White House Conference on Child Care began a dialogue on child care challenges facing parents today – availability, affordability, safety, and quality. To complement the White House Conference on Child Care, the Department of Labor held a Child Care Forum attended by 126 participants from business, labor, education and government. Panel discussions were conducted with the SBA on business partnerships that improve the quality, availability, affordability, and safety of child care for working families.

Publicizing Employer Child Care Best Practices.

At a White House ceremony in April 1998, the President released *Meeting the Needs of Today's Workforce: Child Care Best Practices*, a publication by the Department of Labor Women's Bureau highlighting 40 innovative child care programs initiated by employers across the country to address the needs of working parents. Initiatives from large to very small employers are included. It concludes with an overview of eight collaborative efforts spotlighting the importance of partnerships in increasing employee access to child care assistance programs. Partnerships between businesses as well as between businesses and unions are highlighted. The key finding in the report is that, in today's global economy, providing child care and other family-friendly policies helps companies recruit and retain the best workforce. [For more information, see the Women's Bureau's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/> or call the Women's Bureau's National Resource & Information Center, 1-800-827-5335.]

Child Care Web Page.

The Women's Bureau also promotes greater employer and working parent knowledge about solutions to child care issues through its "Ask Me About Child Care -- I Care!" web page, a new addition to the Bureau's Internet web site. For employers, the site can be a first stop for information about child care options with hyperlinks to useful resources on the Internet. For working parents, there is information

about affordable, quality child care. The media and researchers can access facts and statistics. This information clearinghouse was announced by the President at the April 1998 White House event. The page is located at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/childcare/main.htm>.

Business to Business Mentoring Initiative on Child Care.

The President also announced a new commitment by the Women's Bureau -- the Business-to-Business Mentoring Initiative on Child Care, begun in early 1999. In implementing this program, the Women's Bureau is reaching out to businesses:

- C To promote awareness among industry leaders that affordable and safe child care is a top concern for families.
- To connect employers who have effective child care programs with other employers considering child care options for their workers.

Volunteer business mentors are assisting other employers who want to help their workers balance their work and family needs. The initiative is helping them choose the type of child care program that works best for them, launch their initiative effectively, and avoid pitfalls and control costs. As of September 1999, 370 businesses had signed on as mentors or mentees. [For more information, see the Women's Bureau's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/> or call the Women's Bureau's National Resource & Information Center, 1-800-827-5335.]

ELDER CARE

In May 1998, the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau released the publication, *Work and Elder Care: Facts for Caregivers and Their Employers*. This publication frames the elder care issue and offers practical information on the types of assistance available, such as: geriatric care managers; homemakers and home health aides; companions/friendly visitors; telephone reassurance systems; respite care; daily money managers; home-delivered meals; chores and home repair; legal assistance; family and medical leave; and assistance with financing care. It also includes resources to help employers and other organizations assist workers in coping with the demands of elder care. [For more information, see the Women's Bureau's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/> or call the Women's Bureau's National Resource & Information Center, 1-800-827-5335.]

The Women's Bureau and the Office of Personnel Management's Workplace Advocacy Office are collaborating on an Elder Care Best Practices Report, with OPM featuring innovations in federal Agencies and the Women's Bureau highlighting initiatives in businesses, community organizations and local governments. The report will be available in FY2000.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Child Care in Northern Ireland.

As part of the U.S. Department of Labor /Northern Ireland Training and Employment Agency

cooperative agreement signed in September 1998 at the Northern Ireland “Vital Voices: Women in Democracy” Conference in Belfast, both agencies recognized the important role of available and affordable quality child care in enabling women to enhance the well-being of their families and contribute to the economic growth of their nations. The Women’s Bureau is the lead Department of Labor agency for the implementation of this agreement.

As part of the implementation of this Agreement, the Northern Ireland Training and Employment Agency organized a U.S. study tour, which took place in May 1999. One of the focus groups concentrated on family-friendly policies and programs. This group, representatives of Northern Ireland businesses and nonprofit organizations, visited Kansas City, Missouri and was hosted by the Women’s Bureau Region VII. They toured facilities and met with government and nonprofit organization representatives, employers, and employees. They finished their U.S. tour at the U.S. Department of Labor headquarters in Washington, DC; where they shared their experiences with other focus groups participating in the tour and developed an action plan to advance employer-assisted child care and other work/family policies when they returned home. Implementation of the plan is now underway.

In early 1999, the Women’s Bureau assisted the Northern Ireland Vital Voices office in establishing a child care coordinating group that is working to advance the issue of employer-assisted child care. The Women’s Bureau also provided the office with information on Women’s Bureau projects to advance the provision of employer-assisted child care in the U.S., as well as private sector best practices in the area of employer-assisted child care.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

Nursing Mothers Program.

The Department of Labor’s WorkLife Center promotes and supports programs to assist employees balance the demands of work, family, and personal life. One of these programs is the Lactation Support Program. As part of the Program, for many years DOL’s national office has provided a lactation room in the Health Unit. This service provides a designated lactation area, breast feeding support and education, and, if needed, referrals to other health care providers as well as assistance by the Health Unit Medical Staff. In addition, since 1994 women employees with children in the DOL Child Development Center have had access to a private room to nurse infants or express milk. DOL’s regional offices offer access to a room for nursing mothers upon request. They also assist those employees who require additional assistance and support through the resource and referral service available to all employees free of charge.

Resource and Referral Service.

One of the strategic goals of the Department of Labor is a quality workplace that supports a greater balance between work and family. To assist its employees in achieving this balance, in 1998 DOL contracted with the Dependent Care Connection (DCC), a leading provider of comprehensive counseling, educational, and referral services. Counselors are available 24 hours a day through an “800” number, LaborNet (a DOL Intranet service for employees), or the Internet.

This resource and referral service for child care, elder care, adoptive care, tutoring services, schools, summer programs for children, etc. is available to all DOL employees nationwide. For those with child care issues, the service provides counseling, education, and referrals to family day care, child care centers, in-home care givers, baby-sitting agencies, nursery schools, etc. For elder care needs, it provides education and referrals to nursing homes and home health care, emergency care, etc. It assists employees to obtain care-giving assistance for elderly parents living in another state, enabling them to locate resources in the state in which their parents live. For employees interested in adoption, it provides adoption medical resources, state adoption specialists, 8international adoptions, public/private adoptions, etc. To date, approximately 90 percent of the employees using this service have been female.

By offering this service to all employees, DOL dramatically reduces their time and effort required to obtain information and quality services and also helps reduce workplace turnover, absenteeism, and stress. It builds a more efficient, dedicated, and effective workforce.

G. Women in Power and Decision-Making

G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.

[See also F.5, "Federal Contract Compliance," for a discussion of the Department of Labor's Glass Ceiling Initiative.]

H. Institutional Mechanisms for Women

H.1. Create or strengthen national mechanisms and other governmental bodies.

PRESIDENT’S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON WOMEN

PICW Women and the Global Economy Working Group.

Since its first meeting in February 1998, this group has been working to ensure that Administration policy deliberations on global economic issues give appropriate consideration to the effects of policies and programs on women. The Working Group has compiled, and will continue to update, an annotated bibliography on the effects of globalization on women, for use by policy makers, NGOs and others. The Working Group is also developing a Framework that sets forth the U.S. government’s overarching goals and strategic objectives in promoting women’s participation in the global economy, and also enumerates tools for addressing these objectives. A subgroup of the Working Group worked on U.S. preparations for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministerial Meeting on Women and the follow-up Framework to Integrate Women in APEC, and is now working on implementation of the Framework (see F.2 for discussion of the APEC Ministerial and its results). For more information, see the Working Group’s web site at

http://www.dol.gov/dol_sec/public/programs/iacw/main.htm.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Women’s Bureau.

The Women’s Bureau was created by Congress in 1920 and given the mandate, “to formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment.” The Director of the Women’s Bureau is the principal advisor to the Secretary of Labor on issues affecting women in the labor force. The Women’s Bureau sees its mission into the foreseeable future as:

- Informing working women about Women’s Bureau programs and initiatives that benefit them.
- Providing information to, and receiving information from, women about economic issues and their economic and social status.
- Providing reliable, useful information to policymakers.
- Building partnerships with other agencies within the DOL and throughout government, as well as with unions, nonprofits, businesses, community-based organizations, and working women themselves.
- Impacting workplace policies at all levels.

In 1995, the Women’s Bureau established its Internet web pages at <http://www2.dol.gov/dol/wb/>. In 1997, it added web pages for all ten of its regional offices, providing regional statistics, updates, news

events, Working Women Count Honor Roll member organizations, and Fair Pay Resource organizations.

The Women's Bureau National Resource and Information Center.

The National Resource and Information Center (NRIC) was established in 1999 to provide the most direct access to information on issues of concern to working women, their families, and their employers. NRIC is accessible through two toll-free phone numbers (1-800-827-5335 and 1-800-347-3741) as well as the Internet. NRIC offers the following:

- The Work and Family Clearinghouse, created in 1989, a computerized database and resource center on women's employment issues that impact work and family life, including child care and elder care. It contains Women's Bureau publications and numerous supporting publications and resources.
- The Fair Pay Clearinghouse, opened in 1996, which provides technical assistance to employees, employers, unions and other organizations on successful efforts to identify and eliminate sex and race discrimination in wage setting policies. It contains a variety of information, including Women's Bureau publications, and provides links to other government agencies with related information.
- The "Don't Work in the Dark -- Know Your Rights" public education campaign, launched in 1994 to help alert America's working women about their workplace rights. Women can access reader-friendly information on laws on family and medical leave, pregnancy discrimination, and sexual harassment (first published in 1993 and updated in Fiscal Year 2000); and age discrimination, wage discrimination, and disability discrimination (first published in 1995, updated in FY 2000). Supporting information includes publications from the Women's Bureau and other relevant agencies.
- An array of other publications and resource materials. Topics include: small business ownership, women in management, apprenticeships and nontraditional occupations, pensions, veterans affairs, domestic violence, safety and health, upcoming worldwide conferences, and much more.

The Women's Bureau website is at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb>.

H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs, and projects.

CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, AND SURVEYS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PUBLIC

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

“Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children” (International Labor Affairs Bureau, September 1995).

“Don’t Work in the Dark” Regional Working Women’s Summits (Women’s Bureau, September 1996).

National Working Women’s Summit, “Economic Equity: Realities, Responsibilities and Rewards,” (Women’s Bureau, June 1997).

U.S. regional meetings in preparation for the June 2000 UN “Beijing + 5” review of progress made since the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women (Women’s Bureau, October 1999-February 2000).

H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

Data Collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) regularly issues a wide range of data in the broad field of labor economics, including an extensive amount of information on working women. BLS will continue to issue and improve these data as part of its contribution to the Department of Labor’s strategic goals. Published data that contribute to the critical areas of concern identified in the United Nations Platform for Action include:

Women and Poverty: Monthly data on employment and unemployment among men and women, including separate information on women who head households, and quarterly data on the earnings of men and women. An annual report on the working poor includes data by gender and family structure.

Education and Training: Monthly data on the employment status of young men and women by school enrollment and educational attainment; annual data on college enrollment by recent high school graduates; annual data on employment status of adult men and women by educational attainment; and periodic surveys on training.

Violence: Annual data on workplace fatalities (including homicides).

Women and Armed Conflict: Biennial data on women veterans.

Women and the Economy: Extensive information on occupations, industries, hours of work, self employment, and other characteristics of working women; monthly data on employment status of women by age; quarterly data on usual weekly earnings of men and women; annual data on

employment status of women by family status and presence of children; biennial surveys on contingent work and alternative working arrangements; periodic surveys of job tenure, worker displacement, and work at home.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women: Extensive statistical information on women as described in other sections; plans for new information collection and dissemination activities described under special initiatives below.

Women and the Environment: Information on occupational illnesses; information on consumer expenditures.

The Girl Child: School enrollment, educational attainment, and employment status of teenage girls (16-19 years of age).

Most of the data described above are available at the BLS website <http://www.bls.gov/>.

Report on Women's Earnings: 1998.

In April 1999, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U. S. Department of Labor introduced the first in a series of annual reports focusing on women's earnings. Drawing mainly on usual weekly earnings data from the BLS Current Population Survey, the report examines various factors that influence the pay of women and men. These factors include age, race and ethnicity, marital status, educational attainment, full- and part-time status, occupation, and union membership. Much of this information has been available from a variety of reports and news releases issued by BLS; this was the first time that it was brought together in a comprehensive report.

The first report, *Highlights of Women's Earnings in 1998*, provides considerable data on the earnings of women and men, a descriptive summary of the data, and a technical note detailing the source of the data and the operative concepts and definitions. It is on the BLS website at <http://www.bls.gov/cpshome.htm>. [As part of the report's distribution, the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau distributed 700 copies of this report to selected women's researchers and advocates.]

Where to Find BLS Statistics on Women.

Periodically, BLS issues a report that summarizes the information it has on women and assists users in identifying and locating the material. This report not only delineates the range of data that is collected on a regular or special schedule, but also lists articles and reports that contain descriptions and analyses of the data. The most recent report was issued in July 1998.

Asian and Pacific Islander Women in the U.S.

In June 1998, the Department of Labor Women's Bureau published its first fact sheet on Asian American and Pacific Islander Women in the U.S. *Facts About Asian American and Pacific Islander Women* supplements updated versions of *20 Facts on Women Workers* (April 1999); *Black*

Women in the Labor Force (March 1997); and *Women of Hispanic Origin in the Labor Force* (February 1997). [For more information, see the Women's Bureau's home page at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/> or call the Women's Bureau's National Resource & Information Center, 1-800-827-5335.]

I. Human Rights of Women

I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

ILO CONVENTIONS

ILO Convention 111 Concerning Employment Discrimination.

Convention 111 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) requires the ratifying country to “undertake to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote...equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation...” The convention aims to eliminate discrimination in employment based on race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, and social origin.

The Tripartite Advisory Panel on International Labor Standards (TAPILS), which considers whether the U.S. should ratify conventions of the ILO, recommended to the President’s Committee on the ILO that the President seek ratification of ILO Convention 111. The President sent this convention to the U.S. Senate for its advice and consent in mid-1998.

ILO Convention 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

[See L.6 for information on this new Convention..]

I.3. Achieve legal literacy.

WORKING WOMEN’S RIGHTS

“Don’t Work in the Dark – Know Your Rights” Campaign.

In January 1994, the Department of Labor Women’s Bureau launched its “Don’t Work in the Dark – Know Your Rights” campaign with three reader-friendly brochures on the Family and Medical Leave Act, pregnancy discrimination, and sexual harassment. In 1995 and 1996, the Women’s Bureau added three more brochures on age, wage, and disability discrimination. Each brochure gives numerous examples of discrimination, describes what the law says, give examples of what a woman can do if she’s discriminated against, and gives information on where to get help and additional information. Public service announcements advertized the brochures, which have been widely distributed. The brochures were updated in FY 1999. For more information, call the Women’s Bureau’s National Resource and Information Center at 1-800-827-5335 or visit the Women’s Bureau’s web site at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/>.

J. Women and the Media

J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

Nontraditional Jobs.

It is a priority of the Women's Bureau to encourage women to consider opportunities in high-wage, high-opportunity jobs, many of which are in "traditionally male" fields. Monthly, beginning in April 1999, the Bureau highlights a promising nontraditional occupation for women on its website. The Women's Bureau provides information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics 1998-99 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* on the nature of the work, working conditions, training requirements, earnings, and job outlook and interviews a woman currently working in the field. Among those visiting the website are members of the media, who use the information to help with their stories. The web page is at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb>.

L. The Girl Child

L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.

The Department of Labor's Women's Bureau regional offices co-sponsor, and provide technical assistance to, various events and programs for girls. Examples include programs promoting hands-on experience with technology, math and science education, nontraditional jobs, and young women's leadership.

L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development, and training.

[For information on youth employment training programs, see F.4, "Employment and Training Programs."]

L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labor and protect young girls at work.

ENFORCING LABOR LAWS IN THE U.S.

Safe Work/Safe Kids.

In FY 1999, the Secretary of Labor announced a new initiative, Safe Work/Safe Kids, to increase compliance with U.S. labor laws and maintain momentum in reducing on-the-job injuries to American teenagers. The goal is to assure that young people have opportunities for instructive and constructive early work experiences which enhance and do not compete with their education, and which are safe. The initiative employs a comprehensive strategy of enhanced, targeted enforcement; increased compliance education aimed at employers, parents, and teens; stronger partnerships with states, businesses, and other organizations; and heightened public awareness. Two previously-underway campaigns have been incorporated into this initiative. The Work Safe This Summer campaign, launched each spring beginning in 1996, kicked off the Department's efforts to keep the four to five million teens who work during the summer safe. The Fair Harvest/Safe Harvest campaign, launched in Fall 1998, focuses on ensuring the safe employment of teens in agriculture. For more information, see the Wage and Hour web page at http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/public/whd_org.htm.

[For more information on domestic enforcement of U.S. child labor law, see A.1, "Enforcing Labor Standards."]

INTERNATIONAL CHILD LABOR

Research and Reporting.

In response to a direct request from Congress in FY 1994, the Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) established a specialized unit to investigate, research, and report on the plight of working children around the world, particularly those involved in the production of goods imported into the United States. ILAB has established itself, and thus the United States Government, as one of the most important and reliable sources for information and policy recommendations on exploitative child labor.

- *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*, volumes I (1994) and II (1995), discuss the use of child labor in manufactured, mined, and agricultural products imported by the United States, as well as forced and bonded child labor. Volume III (1996) encourages United States companies to adopt codes of conduct regarding the use of exploitative child labor and to take a more active role in the monitoring and implementation of those codes. Volume IV (1997) looks at how some companies and organizations are using labels to provide consumers with child labor related data about the products they purchase. Volume V (1999) examines efforts to eliminate child labor in 16 countries.
- In Fiscal Year 1999, Congress asked ILAB to undertake a study on the economic benefits that could be realized from the elimination of abusive and exploitative child labor and the increased enrollment of these children in school. The study will look at the economic benefits to individual countries and to possible global benefits, in particular U.S. trade, that would result from the elimination of abusive and exploitative child labor.
- In June 1999, President Clinton signed Executive Order No. 13126, which prohibits federal procurement of goods that are mined, manufactured, or produced, wholly or in part, using forced or indentured child labor. In October 1999, the Department of Labor, in consultation with the Departments of Treasury and State, published a list of goods that DOL has reason to believe may have been made with forced or indentured child labor. This list will be maintained on a regular basis.

International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor.

Since 1995, Congress has appropriated a total of \$37.1 million for the Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) to contribute to the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) -- the most effective worldwide program to eliminate child labor. In FY1999, the Administration, with the support of Congress, allocated about \$30 million to fund activities addressing child labor internationally, including a nearly tenfold increase in funding for IPEC. ILAB plans to focus this funding for IPEC on four major goals: eliminating child labor in specific hazardous occupations; increasing the number of countries effectively participating in the IPEC program; documenting the extent and nature of child labor in order to develop

effective policies and programs for its elimination; and raising public awareness and disseminating information about the plight of working children.

Among the IPEC programs funded by ILAB are the following:

- Guatemala: Combating child labor in the stone quarries and fireworks workshops.
- Haiti: Program to help child domestic servants
- Pakistan: Programs to phase children out of the soccerball and carpet industries, provide them with educational opportunities, and establish a system for monitoring compliance.
- South Africa: Statistical survey on child labor in South Africa.
- Thailand: Program to prevent child labor and child prostitution.
- Southeast Asia: Programs to combat child labor in the footwear and fishing industries.
- Bangladesh: Program to remove children from Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association factories and provide the children with educational opportunities.

Supporting Non-governmental Initiatives.

DOL also provided funding in 1998 to promote worldwide awareness about child labor as part of the Global March Against Child Labor campaigns in various countries/regions and at the international level.

ILO Convention 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

In June 1999, President Clinton and Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman addressed the International Labor Organization in Geneva and pledged their support for a new convention to prohibit the worst forms of child labor. The ILO's unanimous adoption of ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor represents a significant first step in the struggle to eradicate the most intolerable forms of child labor, including forced or indentured labor of children, child prostitution, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflicts, and employment of children in other forms of work that are harmful to their health, safety, or morals. In November 1999, the U.S. Senate ratified this ILO Convention.

For more information on international child labor, see the Department of Labor's International Child Labor Program website at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/ilab/public/programs/iclp/>.

L.8. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.

Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

Jointly with the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor provides funding for the start-up and operation of “Career Prep” programs at 40 Boys and Girls Clubs throughout the country. With additional funding provided by the Taco Bell Foundation, the clubs establish and operate “Teen Supreme Centers,” which provide job readiness training and career guidance to youth who reside in the targeted communities.

The Youth with Disabilities Leadership Forum.

The Youth with Disabilities Leadership Forum (YLF) is a unique career leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. It provides these young people an opportunity to learn full citizenship skills, thereby enhancing both their employment potential and their ability to contribute to society. Started in California in 1992, the YLF has been replicated in ten states and Puerto Rico, with planning underway in a dozen more states. At least 50 percent of the participants are female.

The YLF is a four-day concentrated educational and motivational experience during which the delegates participate in a wide range of activities and learning experiences in small and large group sessions. Delegates take part in facilitated discussions and exercises designed to develop their personal leadership skills and career development plans. The delegates also attend presentations where they learn that they have the opportunity for an education and a life in their communities. In order to provide leadership by example, the staff and the presenters at the YLF are successful and accomplished adults with disabilities who have traveled the same path these young people are facing. At the end of the YLF, the student delegates make a commitment to follow through on various goals they set for themselves. For more information visit the President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities web page at <http://www.pcepd.gov>.

[For information on youth employment training programs, see F.4, “Employment and Training Programs.”]